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UNCLAS SAN SALVADOR 001305

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR WHA/CEN HILLARY THOMPSON

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: PGOV PREL ES
SUBJECT: OAS RELEASES ELECTORAL REFORM PLAN TOO LATE

REF: SAN SALVADOR 1158
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¶1. (U) Summary: The Organization for American States (OAS) released a technical plan to implement electoral reforms prior to the January and March 2009 elections; however, the plan is likely too late for real reform. End summary.

¶2. (U) The Organization for American States (OAS) released a technical plan to implement electoral reforms as part of their ongoing technical assistance to the Salvadoran Supreme Electoral Tribunal (TSE) on October 15. The plan is intended to assist the TSE to implement reforms prior to the 2009 elections and details specific actions that should be taken to resolve the issues found by the OAS in their December 2007 audit of the electoral system.

¶3. (U) The OAS makes the key following suggestions:

-- that the GOES develop handbooks to regulate access to the electoral lists and to delineate the TSE's duty to regulate the electoral system.

-- that the Electoral Surveillance Board, TSE, and the Supreme Electoral Magistrates have access to the entire list of voters and registry information.

-- that the political parties have permanent access to the list, but not access to personal information of registered voters.

-- that the citizenry have access to the entire list, without personal information, and have access to their own personal information in order to verify its accuracy.

¶4. (U) Comment: Some of the OAS suggestions are smart, particularly the permanent party access which has been an ongoing issue; however, the timing is too late to affect the upcoming elections. The plan is notably silent on the issue of signatures on the ballots, which has been of great concern to the FMLN. (reftel)
GLAZER